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## A Clean Home

Cooperative Extension Service  
*South Dakota State University*

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**Cooperative Extension Service  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
South Dakota State University, Brookings**

No one ever likes to clean, but we can do several things to make the necessary jobs easier. By following a few simple steps we can have cleaner, healthier homes and happier, healthier families.

Some cleaning **must** be done each day, some each week, some once or twice a month, and some only once or twice a year. How you plan to manage the cleaning jobs in your home is something you and your family **must** work out together.

Working together, set up a schedule for cleaning and write it down. This helps the family members establish good cleaning habits. By following a schedule you will know what to do next, how much time the job takes, and who is to do that particular job.

Answer these questions before making out a schedule:

a. What needs to be cleaned in our home?	b. How often does each task need to be done?	c. How much time will the task take?	d. In what order will the task best be done?
			<p>No two families will operate quite the same. But perhaps the general schedule checklist on the next page can help you make your cleaning plans.</p>

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"A Clean Home" was prepared by Carol Jo Thompson, area home furnishings specialist, Cooperative Extension Service, South Dakota State University.



### TASKS TO DO EACH DAY

1. Before you make the beds, air the beds and bedrooms by opening the window about 10 or 15 minutes.
2. Make up each bed. Change bedding on beds of children, infants, or old people, if "accidents" have occurred.
3. Hang clothing in the closets or put it away in drawers or other storage units.
4. Leave bedroom closet doors open at night so they can air out. Open other closet doors also so closet air doesn't become stale or musty.
5. Clean bathroom sink, tub, and shower after using them.
6. Scrub toilet bowl and toilet seat.
7. Clean the bathroom floor.
8. Hang up wet towels to dry. Replace soiled towels with clean ones.
9. Put all dirty clothes in the laundry.
10. Empty all wastebaskets.
11. Empty garbage can and line with fresh paper. If necessary wash inside of can with hot soapy water.
12. Wash the dishes after each meal.
13. Wash off counters, tables, rangetop, and the top, front and handle of the refrigerator after each meal.
14. Scour the sink with cleanser.
15. Wipe up spills as they occur.
16. Sweep, vacuum or dust mop the dust and food particles from the floors.
17. Sweep the front and back porch and steps.
18. Dust furniture.
19. Put all things away after you've used them.

### TASKS TO DO EACH WEEK

1. Open doors and windows for 15-30 minutes to air out the house. Be sure screens are in place so bugs and mice can't get in.
2. Change sheets on all of the beds.
3. Shake scatter rugs.
4. Do the laundry—clothing, bedding, towels, bathmats.
5. Dust all furniture, picture frames, floors, and woodwork.
6. Dust ornaments in your house . . . such as knickknacks, vases, plastic flowers.
7. Polish mirrors.
8. Vacuum all upholstered furniture and rugs.
9. Clean the floors.



10. Clean the kitchen range.
11. Clean the interior of the refrigerator.
12. Remove head from dustmop and launder in soapy water.
13. Wash broom in soapy water, rinse, and lay across top of clothesline to dry.
14. Launder all cleaning cloths and hang out to dry.
15. Clean up the yard.
16. Do the ironing.

### TASKS TO DO EACH MONTH

1. Hang draperies on a line outdoors to air them or go over them with the dusting attachment on your vacuum. Launder curtains if they are soiled. If curtains do not require laundering, hang them out for an airing anyway.





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2. Clean mattresses and springs by vacuuming or brushing. Turn the mattresses end for end and side for side to evenly distribute the wear.
3. Clean bureau drawers, closets and cupboards. Replace soiled shelf lining.
4. Wipe or lightly brush dust from walls, ceilings, window shades, Venetian blinds or lampshades. Also wipe dust from light bulbs.
5. Wash windows and window frames.
6. Clean fingermarks off door frames and other woodwork.
7. Wash and polish china, glass or metal accessories.
8. Wash and wax the floors and furniture.
9. Wash porch and porch steps.
10. Empty and clean the vacuum cleaner.
11. Hose out the outside garbage can and clean it up nicely.
12. Make needed repairs in clothing or furnishings.

### ONCE-A-YEAR TASKS

1. Clean furnace and/or air conditioner and be sure they are in good working condition. Clean radiators and clean heating stoves.
2. Wash storm windows and screens. Paint frames and repair screens if necessary.
3. Launder or dry clean curtains, draperies, slipcovers, blankets, and bedspreads.
4. Remove light fixtures and wash in sudsy water.
5. Shampoo rugs or carpet.
6. Remove all clothing from the closets and hang on the line outdoors to air.
7. Wash wooden furniture and floors with soapy water, rinse and allow to thoroughly dry. Put on new wax or polish.

You can probably add other ideas of your own to the four lists of suggested activities. You may want to change the location of some of the tasks. The lists are intended merely as a guide for you. You probably will not want to do the weekly, monthly, or yearly tasks all the same day. However, each task will need to be done at least once during the suggested time period. In some areas you may need to do the task either more or less frequently.

### Take Drudgery Out of Cleaning

There are other ways we can take some of the drudgery out of housecleaning. You are always interested in saving time and energy, so check some of these suggestions that might be of help to you:

### Keep as Much Dirt OUT of the House as Possible

- ☐ Have hard surfaced steps and walks.
- ☐ Keep porches, steps, and walkways swept clean.
- ☐ Put mats at outside doors so persons entering your home can clean their shoes.
- ☐ Use hard surface floor coverings in areas of heavy use. (This might be a low pile, braided, or other hard carpet, or it might be a wood or tile surface.)
- ☐ Store outdoor and work clothing as near the outside door as possible to prevent carrying dirt all through the house.
- ☐ Arrange hooks at a convenient height so children and adults alike can hang up soiled clothes.
- ☐ Have special shelves near the outside door for keeping muddy boots and shoes.
- ☐ A short line or hanger with clothespins makes an excellent place for drying wet mittens, gloves, stocking caps.
- ☐ Avoid dust-catching furnishings and finishes.
- ☐ Select flat surfaces, straight lines, and smooth-turned edges.
- ☐ Smooth fabrics collect less dust than rough-textured fabrics.
- ☐ Flat woodwork is easier to care for than fussy, grooved woodwork.
- ☐ Select washable wall finishes.
- ☐ By waxing wood finishes you make them easier to clean.
- ☐ Have sufficient storage space in each room. A place for every thing and every thing in its place.

### Set Reasonable Cleanliness Standards in Keeping with the Other Values of Your Family

Beyond the minimal essentials for health and safety there are no rules about how clean a house must be. Each family sets its own standards. To do this consider:

- The number and ages of your family members.
- The health of your family members.
- The interests and activities of your family members.
- The size and condition of your house.
- The climate where you live.
- The season of the year.
- How many share in cleaning the house.
- The type of cleaning equipment you have.
- Your family should try to set standards acceptable to all the family members—so everyone will do his share and no one will need to nag.



## Select and Use Equipment that Eliminates Some of the Labor Involved in Cleaning

Two types of "tools" will be needed for most cleaning jobs.

- Those needed to soften and remove moist soil which has dried and hardened on washable surfaces:

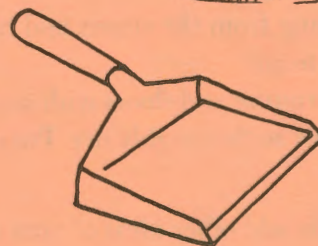
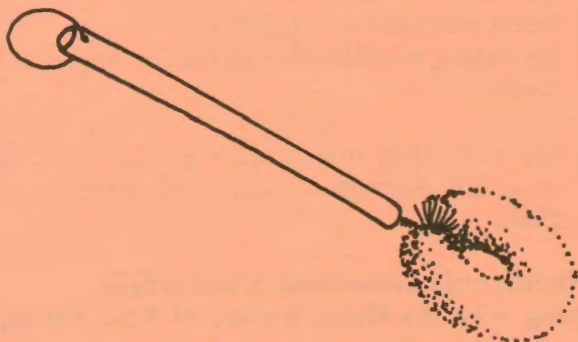
- ☐ sponge
- ☐ mop
- ☐ bucket
- ☐ toilet brush

- Those needed to lift and remove loose, dry dirt and dust.

- ☐ vacuum cleaner and attachments
- ☐ carpet sweeper
- ☐ broom
- ☐ dust pan
- ☐ dust mop
- ☐ dust cloths

- Cleaning tools selected for your home should be

- ☐ easy to use
- ☐ efficient
- ☐ easy to clean
- ☐ easy to store
- ☐ versatile
- ☐ economical



## Develop Cleaning Methods that Guarantee Best Results with Least Time and Effort

- Know what the item or surface is made of before you clean it.
- Choose a cleaning method and product suitable for that item or surface.
- Keep cleaning supplies and equipment together in one location.
- As a rule, your cleaning can be done easiest when you work from the top down and from the outside in.

- Your method of work will greatly depend on the tool you are using.

Keeping your home clean, neat, and beautiful will make your family happy. Homes are made to be lived in and for families to have fun in. Avoid the sterile, picture-book, "unlived-in" looking house. Make your house a *home*—a healthy, satisfying place in which to live. You go a long way in making a house a *home* by keeping it clean and neat.